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PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Identical letters dated 17 August 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to forward herewith a letter dated 17 August 1999 from Burhanuddin Rabbani, President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 45, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. A. G. Ravan FARHADI
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 17 August 1999 from the President of Afghanistan addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 1 August 1999 on the large-scale crimes against humanity committed by the Pakistani-Taliban troops in their recent drive of ethnic cleansing against the civilian populations of the vast territories in the Shamali plains and the provinces of Parwan and Kapisa (S/1999/838), I should like to inform you of the latest upsurge of atrocities by the Taliban militia and the Pakistani military personnel, who twice in less than 10 days have been undertaking vicious military onslaughts.

Having realized that the latest situation in Afghanistan constitutes one of the most calamitous of human tragedies, it is a matter of dismay that despite your expressions of concern thereon, for which the Islamic State of Afghanistan remains appreciative, the expected reaction by the Organization of the United Nations has been inadequate and inconsequential.

The Pakistani and Taliban troops continue to barbarously pursue their campaign of systematic ethnic cleansing and genocide by means of scorched-earth policy. In addition to troop mobilization, heavy aerial bombardment and ground artillery barrage, they have targeted civilian neighbourhoods. The widespread use of hundreds of incendiary and cluster bombs, the levelling and burning down of entire villages, the mass killing of hundreds of innocent civilians, mostly women and children and the forced displacement of over 40,000 women, elderly and children to the barren hot deserts of Jalalabad, where a dozen women and children have died daily from excessive heat and lack of water and food, in addition to the already 300,000 internally displaced refugees, all present the latest predicament and catastrophe in Afghanistan. Also, the latest crackdown by the Taliban in Kabul, with the arrest of thousands of people at Khair Khana on the northern outskirts of the city, where over 10,000 were forcibly deported and sought refuge after the 28 July Pakistani-Taliban attack on their villages in the Shamali plains, is another dimension of the ongoing genocide.

If it were to be claimed that the international community, non-governmental organizations and aid agencies had adopted an attitude of indifference, it would not be an exaggeration.

Justice and equal rights of mankind - two sacred principles - having always been attributed to be the guiding criteria by aid agencies and the international community, against the backdrop of the latest tragedy, have led to a predominant impression among our people that such notions are nothing more than empty rhetoric, bearing no weight whatsoever. It is exactly here that the Afghan nation, instead of forwarding their appeal to world leaders, take the liberty to express their grief to the conscience of the peoples of the world, and rather ask them for assistance.

It is my earnest anticipation that you, with due consideration of the extent of the current catastrophe in Afghanistan, would render your utmost in the cessation of foreign aggression in the country, and an immediate provision of humanitarian assistance for the victims of the latest tragedy.

(Signed) Burhanuddin RABBANI
President
Islamic State of Afghanistan